

Statement Alex Weintz, Governor Mary Fallin's Office

One of the ways the state of Oklahoma saves taxpayer dollars is to make purchases through the Department of Central Services, where joint purchasing power creates an economy-of-scale. Discounted rates are awarded based on the volume of purchases made, which increase with the number of state agencies participating. Therefore, every government agency that makes purchases through DCS lowers costs for every other government agency, whereas every agency that opts out of that system raises costs.

Furthermore, DCS purchases are governed by competitive bidding laws that guarantee a level of quality, increase accountability and transparency, and reduce the potential for abuse of taxpayer dollars. Spot-buys do not come with the same safeguards and, in fact, can leave the state vulnerable to expensive lawsuits. For instance, a food order made outside of the normal purchasing process might leave the state open to any litigation should that food turn out to be contaminated. Any savings realized in the initial purchase would surely be wiped out by legal bills and ultimately leave taxpayers on the hook.

For all of these reasons, Governor Fallin vetoed HB 1388. Her intent is to cut costs for every agency while preserving the integrity of the purchasing process.